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public view, and discussed with diligent attention and firmness, though with great calmness and moderation!

K.

Odes Choires de Horacé traduites en vers François par Mons. de Montville professeur de Langue François, 2 tom. p.p. 406. Dublin, Downes, 1808.

A FRENCH translation of Horace, written and published in Dublin should attract our attention from its novelty. Our attention will be arrested when we find that the translation has been executed not without some degree of merit; and that the writer, though he has by no means completely succeeded by producing a version in all points worthy of the original, has demonstrated the practicability of what M. Dacier supposed impossible, the giving a poetic dress in the French Language to the prince of Roman Lyricists. Such an attempt if executed with any degree of ability is highly praise-worthy: for it must be the opinion of every one who has read a prose translation of a poet, that it gives no idea of the real beauties of the original. It is a lifeless corpse, a body without a soul; we may observe the proportion of the parts, nay we may have a better opportunity of discovering the internal mechanism, the artful arrangement and adaptation of the several members which produce such powerful effects on our minds, but we vainly look for that living principle, that spark of divinity, which gave life and spirit, and grace to it when living. To be convinced of this, we need but compare Macpherson's prose translation of the Iliad, with that of Pope or even of Cowper.

The work before us is a selection of some of the Odes of Horace; such perhaps, as most accorded with the writer's taste, or appeared to him best fitted to assume a modern habit. But before entering on any investigation of their merits, it may not be improper to mention the cause of their being written, for this should justly have some weight in determining our opinion of their merits. In

doing this we give the author's own words. "While I was spending some time with a friend, at a dinner which followed the examination of the literary progress of his young pupils, whom he is preparing with the most attentive care for the fulfilment of the different duties which they will have hereafter to perform in the world, and whom he retains in the bounds of respect and duty, by a gentle discipline, which makes a much greater impression on the youthful heart, than a forbidding austerity; at this dinner, at which my friend as usual presided with the politeness and affability of a man of the world, I was asked to sing. As I was a stranger, though able to express my thoughts with fluency and correctness in English, I thought that a song in that language would possess little beauty in my mouth, and I knew that a French song would afford but little entertainment to a great part of the company. I therefore proposed to sing an Ode of Horace. My offer was unanimously accepted; a Horace was produced; and then *inter pocula* (over our cups) as the greater part of these charming and sublime songs have been composed, I sung some of my favourites; among the rest, *Jam satis terribis*; and *Odi profunum vulgus*. The next morning, still inspired by my friend's excellent wine, and by the enthusiasm which the divine strains of that sweet writer had inspired the preceding evening, I attempted to translate some of them, particularly the two just mentioned; and on reading them, I judged them to possess sufficient merit to venture to show them to my friend and to another person of equal respectability, who, to use the words of my author is perfectly *doctus sermonis utriusque lingue*. Both these, with several others, expressed their lively approbation of my *coup d'essai*, and assured me that if I did not continue the translation, they could attribute it to nothing but the most culpable indolence. Such encouragement induced me to attempt the work, and about the beginning of last October, I began my translation regularly."

With such motives for writing

we cannot be severe in our remarks. Indeed we have been so much amused at the politeness of the lively Frenchman, which exhibited itself in a form so original, that we proceeded in the perusal with a desire to find subjects for praise. By the bye we are somewhat at a loss to guess at the kind of air with which he accompanied the verses, nor can we help congratulating him on the select party he was engaged in, which, though unacquainted with French, could taste the beauties of a Latin ode. We have never been so fortunate. In whatever company we have joined, we venture to say that the greater part would have been equally at a loss, be the language what it might, except plain English: and at the same time must remark that our Anacreontic translator must be a great stranger to the manners of this country, or he would have known that singing in an unknown tongue is so far from being a breach of politeness, that it is now considered as an undeniable mark of superior refinement. The lovers of Italian music are often gratified with strains, which are equally unintelligible to the hearers, and to the fair performer who excites the extatic admiration of her enraptured, we had almost said, her long-eared auditory.

In the translation of a poet, so nervous and energetic as Horace, into a language, which together with the inferiority inherent in all modern European languages, labours under a peculiar barrenness of expression that weakens and unhinges it, the greatest difficulty to be contended with, is the unnerving and frittering away the dignity of the original, by employing periphrases necessary to convey the full meaning of the author. It was impossible to prevent this altogether, but M. de Monteville seems to have been aware of the difficulty and to have struggled against it in some cases with success. The ode, *O navis referent in mare*, is translated concisely and is nearly, though not altogether free from this fault.

Navire infortuné! cesse, que vas tu faire?
Sur la mer en courroux voudrais tu t'ex-
poser?

Ah! crois moi, reste au port, ne quitte point
la terre

Evite le danger.

Ne vois tu pas tes bancs depourvus de
rames?

Par les vents Africains tes mats sont
fracassés:

Sans cordages comment peux tu braver les
lames

Dont tes flancs sont frappés.

Ta voile déchirée, hélas! est inutile.

Tu ne vois plus de Dieux que tu puisses
invoquer,

Enfant d'une forêt en nobles pins fertile,
Rien ne te peut sauver.

Le matelot timide, effrayé de l'orage,

N'a point recours aux Dieux sur ta poupe
gravés

Crains donc de t'exposer aux horreurs du nau-
frage;

Crains les vents irrités.

O toi! qui me causes des peines si cruelles;
Et pour qui je ressens tant de chagrins
amers,

Evites avec soin ces Cyclades horribles

Qui brillent sur les mers.

The following extract is, on the contrary, a striking example of the defect just alluded to, where we see a single line spun out to a complete stanza.

Te minor latum reget æquus orbem;
Tu gravi curru quatuor Olympum,
Tu parum castis inimica mittes
Fulmina lucis.

The translation is as follows:

..... toujours respectueux,
Il verra sa grandeur à ta votre seconde:
Content de son partage, il bornera ses vœux
A commander au monde.

Et vous—donnant aux Dieux de souve-
rains loix,

Roulerez dans les cieux votre char redout-
able;

Et vos mains lanceront sur nos profanes bois
Votre foudre implacable.

In some cases he is so far from confining himself to his author's expressions, that he contents himself with giving a sense somewhat similar, as in the following instance:

Quid si prisca redit Venus
Diductosque jugo cogit æuæo?
Si flava excutitur Chloe,
Rejectæque patet janua Lydiæ.

Which is thus translated, or rather imitated.

Mais si je reprenois ta chaîne,
Si tu redevenois l'objet de mon amour?

Si rejettant Chloé, ma reine
A toi je consacrais le reste de mes jours.

The ode *Jam veris Comites*, which in our opinion would have better suited the hilarity of a convivial party than those selected by the translator, does credit to his talents. We shall quote a few of the first stanzas, referring the reader to the book itself for the remainder, and for several others in the same style.

Deja par les Zephyrs, compagnons du
printems
Qui seuls calment les mers, nos voiles sont
enflées ;

Nos près sous les frimats ne sont plus
blanchissaus ;
Et de neige les eaux ne coulent plus gon-
flées.

Pleurant toujours Itys, l'objet de ses fu-
reurs,

On voit deja le nid de la triste hirondelle ;
Pour avoir trop puni de brutals ardeurs,
Elle est pour sa famille une honte eternele.

De leurs joyeux haut-bois mêlés a leurs
chansons,

Les bergers font deja retentir la prairie ;
Et plaisent a ce Dieu, qui comble de ses
dons

Les troupeaux bondissans, et les monts
d'Arcadie.

The author states himself to be a teacher of the French language ; we think his book may be extremely useful for the purposes of instruction ; many students learn French and Latin at the same time ; and this mode of study is thought, not without reason, to be attended with peculiar advantage ; each elucidates the other. It serves much the same purpose as the double translations practised by Gibbon, and so strongly recommended by him. Even those who are unacquainted with Latin, will reap both pleasure and improvement, in attaining some knowledge of the original through this medium, which will at the same time give them some taste of the beauties of Horace, while it promotes their knowledge of a language now not only fashionable but necessary.

We have already been forced to pass some severe censures on the state of the Dublin press. This book proves we have not been singular or unjustly severe ; at the conclusion of his preface M. de Montville claims a special indulgence on this score. "I intreat the

reader's indulgence," says he, "particularly for the faults of the printing, which could not fail of occurring through the negligence and ignorance of the printers of this city, who do not understand a single word of either language, and, who, notwithstanding all the attention paid to correctness, always finish their part of the work by leaving a croud of errors." The book itself, and more especially the latter part, affords too many proofs of the justice of the complaint.

*Le Comte de Corke Surnommé le Grand,
ou Seduction sans Artifice suivi de
cinq Nouvelles. Par Madame de
Genlis ; 12mo. 2 vols. p.p. 468.
Colburn, London, 1808.*

FROM the multiplicity of novels of a bad tendency, the name itself has fallen into disrepute. Yet we would be far from joining in the general outcry against them. They have been, no doubt, in many instances prejudicial to society, but they have also been in many others powerful auxiliaries to virtue. They are intimately connected with public manners, and these may justly be stiled minor morals, partly guiding, and partly following the prevailing fashions of the day ; they have from the former cause, often deviated from their legitimate end, the improvement of the mind, and from the latter they have induced their admirers to deviate still farther from an attention to the same desirable object, by setting before them defective or vicious models of imitation. But the abuse hence originating must be remedied, not by the endeavour, in itself impossible, of banishing novels altogether from the libraries of those who make books the mirror in which their minds are fashioned, but by such a judicious selection, as will represent truth and morality and virtue in their proper forms undistorted by the mists of ignorance, or the perversions of intentional misrepresentation. An indiscriminate exclusion would deprive us of a fund of the most instructive entertainment. It is indeed pleasing to observe that though this description of writing still continues in many in-